



Attorney Docket No. 12748US02

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

PATENT APPLICATION OF:

DONALD A. LINES,
NICHOLAS J. FLETCHER,
ERIC G. POW,
MICHAEL SEXSMITH,
BILL GRAY and
HORST THUMM

SERIAL NO. 09/747,571

FILED: DECEMBER 22, 2000

FOR: METHOD AND APPARATUS
FOR EMBOSSING
EXPANDED GRAPHITE
SHEET MATERIAL UNDER
REDUCED PRESSURE

GROUP ART UNIT: 1732

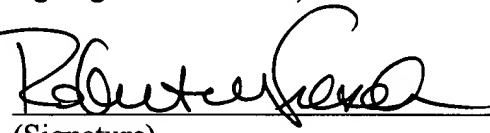
EXAMINER: M. POE

Certificate of Mailing

I hereby certify that this correspondence
is being deposited with the United States
Postal Service with sufficient postage as
first class mail in an envelope addressed
to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box
1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on

June 29, 2004
(Date)

Robert W. Fieseler, Reg. No. 31,826
(Typed or printed name of person
signing this certificate)


(Signature)

COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Applicants submit the following comments in response to the Statement of Reasons for Allowance that accompanied the Notice of Allowability issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on April 6, 2004.

The limitations added to claims 1 and 13 by the Examiner's Amendment that accompanied the Notice of Allowability do not narrow the scope of either claim, but instead make explicit that which was already implicit in those claims, based upon a fair interpretation of the claims in light of the specification and prosecution history. In this regard, the "whereby" clause added to claims 1 and 13, and the limitations as to (a) embossing the expanded graphite sheet material in an embossing atmosphere at a reduced pressure less than atmospheric pressure and (b) maintaining the reduced pressure at least during the embossing step added to claim 13, are set forth in the supporting description at page 5, paragraph 0062 of corresponding U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0039701:

In all of the foregoing embodiments, *a reduced pressure within the embossing chamber is preferably maintained during the embossing process*. Once embossing is complete the pressure within embossing chamber is allowed to return to atmospheric pressure, the embossing components are disengaged, and the embossed expanded graphite sheet can be removed. *By maintaining a reduced pressure in the embossing chamber, the amount of gas trapped within the expanded graphite sheet is reduced*, generally preventing the

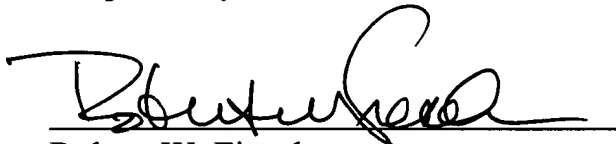
formation of large blisters therein that may make the embossed material unsuitable for a given application.

* * * * *

Applicants therefore request that the foregoing comments on the Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance be entered and made of record in the file of the present application. The Examiner is invited to telephone the applicants' undersigned attorney at (312) 775-8123 if any unresolved matters remain.

These Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance are being submitted concurrently with the payment of the issue fee. Please charge any fees incurred in connection with this submission to Deposit Account No. 13-0017.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robert W. Fieseler', is written over a horizontal line.

Robert W. Fieseler
Registration No. 31,826
Attorney for Applicants

McANDREWS, HELD & MALLOY, LTD.
Citicorp Center
500 West Madison Street, 34th Floor
Chicago, Illinois 60661

Telephone (312) 775-8000
Facsimile (312) 775-8100

Dated: _____